

## *Life Ministry Speaker Bureau*

**Deacon Bob Anderson**  
**St. Frances Cabrini Parish**  
[deaconbob1982@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:deaconbob1982@tampabay.rr.com)

Deacon Bob Anderson was ordained a Permanent Deacon in June 1982 in Hartford, Connecticut. While living in Connecticut, he and his wife spent eight years working with the St. Vincent DePaul Society running a homeless shelter and other low-income properties. In addition to volunteering there every Saturday night, his wife was the business manager for the society and Deacon Bob served as Secretary of the Board of Directors. They left Connecticut as a result of a company transfer to New Hampshire. After taking an early retirement from a high tech company, Deacon Bob went to work for the Diocese of Manchester, NH, as Director of the Respect Life Office, Director of Institutional Ministries (being responsible for all Catholic chaplains in health care and corrections institutions in the state), and co-director of the Office of Public Policy. He also worked with hospice patients. Since moving to Florida, he has been assigned to St. Frances Cabrini parish.

**Topics: Respect Life; Social Justice Issues; End of Life and Stem Cell Research**

**Deacon Peter J. Burns**  
**Director of Parish Ministry Support**  
[pjb@dosp.org](mailto:pjb@dosp.org)

Peter has undergraduate degrees in mental health and human services as well as being a registered nurse. His master's degree from Carnegie Mellon University is in public management of health systems. Peter worked in health care for 18 years in management and/or program development with the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and then in the BayCare Health System in the Tampa Bay area.

Following his health care career, Peter worked at Catholic Charities for more than six years with the last two and a half years as the Pinellas County Regional Director. Currently, he is director of Parish Ministry Support for the Diocese of St. Petersburg and in the third year of the four-year diaconate program for the diocese. Peter and his wife, Charlotte, have four children and one grandchild. They are parishioners at St. Timothy Parish.

**Topics: Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching; John Paul II and Catholic Social Teaching; Economics; The Mass and Social Justice; The War in Iraq - "just war theory..."**

**James (Jim) Cavendish, Ph.D.**  
**Professor of Sociology, University of South Florida**  
[jcavendi@cas.usf.edu](mailto:jcavendi@cas.usf.edu)

Jim received his Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Meinrad Seminary and his PhD in Sociology from the University of Notre Dame. His research and publications focus heavily on religion, social movements and community. His articles, published in journals including the *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, *Sociology of Religion*, *Social Psychology Quarterly* and *Social Science Quarterly*, examine such topics as the influence of Christian base communities on democratization in Latin America, conflicts over women's ordination within U.S. religious denominations, church-based community activism among U.S. congregations and clergy mobilization strategies in church-sponsored anti-drug protests. He also recently completed a comprehensive study, commissioned by the Catholic bishops, of the church's efforts to address racism over the last 25 years. Most recently, he has been investigating the influence of contextual factors on the rise of anti-Arab and anti-Muslim hate crimes after September 11, 2001. He is active in USF's University-Community Initiative, which is devoted to fostering stronger alliances between the university and the community, and he serves on the Diocese of St. Petersburg's Culture of Life Committee.

**Topics: Social Inequality, Prejudice, Discrimination, Racism and Catholic Social Teaching Related to These Issues.**

**Roberta Fernandez**  
**President of Planet Partnership**  
[roberta@planetpartnership.com](mailto:roberta@planetpartnership.com)

Roberta Fernandez is recognized as a leading and passionate voice for environmental change through education, personal responsibility and action. She is committed to creating a new and positive dialogue on what she calls our first truly global challenge - educating individuals and organizations so that they understand the importance of becoming more sustainable in our relationship to the planet we depend on.

Roberta was one of the first 50 volunteers to be selected and personally trained by Al Gore to present his acclaimed climate change message to the public. Roberta helped train over 1,000 additional presenters in her role as senior mentor for the Climate Project.

After giving more than 100 lectures educating individuals on climate change to nearly 6,000 people in Florida, she recognized the need to communicate this information in a more efficient manner. She transformed her consulting business into Planet Partnership, an organization that educates employees as individuals, and empowers them to take meaningful action in their own lives to reduce their carbon footprint. They are encouraged to bring that knowledge into their workplace to promote change and encourage a culture of sustainability into their organization.

Roberta's critical message is that we are all in this together. Every action taken by an organization or individual that is positive and measurable is meaningful. That is the mission of Planet Partnership and the signature of her career.

**Topic: Climate change (impacts and solutions) and sustainability for businesses and churches**

**Mike Ferreira**  
[mmferr@aol.com](mailto:mmferr@aol.com)

Mike Ferreira has earned his daily bread as a technology professional for the past 33 years, taking him to many countries including Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Italy. He was largely responsible for setting up new manufacturing of printers and scanners in these countries, as well as within companies in the US. In his more mature years, Mike has throttled down a little and is currently employed as a computer analyst for a major U.S. company.

Mike decided later in life that he needed to know more about his Church, the Catholic faith and Scripture so he attended Belmont Abbey College and completed his bachelor's degree in Theology in 1999. He is a fully professed member of the Third Order of Carmel, joining the Order in 1995 and making his profession in 1999. Mike has held the position of director at two Lay Carmelite communities as well as Formation Director. The three aspects of the full spiritual life - prayer, community and mission - continues to drive Mike to reach out as he can to those he can help so he is active in the Forty Days for Life and the Justice for Immigrants programs in the Diocese.

Mike has also participated in two Just Faith programs, one in Saint Petersburg and as a facilitator for a group in Seattle, Washington. This experience has made him aware of the many acts of oppression throughout the world and especially the genocide in Darfur, Sudan.

Mike is a member of Holy Cross Church in Saint Petersburg where he is a Eucharistic Minister and a member of the Arts and Environment Committee.

**Topic: The situation in Darfur**

**Chris Gladu**  
[prov24-11@juno.com](mailto:prov24-11@juno.com)

Chris Gladu has been sidewalk counseling outside abortion mills since 1993. Chris is well versed in most all aspects of the pro-life movement and over time has participated in pro-life activities with such organizations as Life Dynamics, Helpers of God's Precious Infants, Operation Rescue, Right to Life of Hillsborough County, Texans Against Violence and Discrimination, Project Gabriel, Project Rachel, The Catholic Pro-life Committee of North Texas and the Knights of Columbus. He holds a Master's degree in Pastoral Studies from St. Leo University and currently serves as the Knights of Columbus State Pro-Life Liaison to the diocese of St Petersburg. Chris has recently authored a novel with a Catholic, Pro-life theme entitled

## Presence of My Enemies.

**Topics: The pro-life movement, ways to fight abortion without leaving home, strategies for building an effective parish pro-life organization, Humanae Vitae study (requires 3 hours to do effectively)**

## **Hillsborough County Homeless Coalition Speakers Bureau**

813-223-6115; [www.unexpectedfaces.org](http://www.unexpectedfaces.org); [www.homelessofhc.org](http://www.homelessofhc.org)

The “Unexpected Faces, Unexpected Places” Speakers Bureau aims to dispel the myths, misconceptions and stereotypes that exist about our homeless neighbors. By opening up a dialogue between our neighbors, with and without homes, we begin to emphasize our similarities and better understand one another. This dialogue helps us address the causes of homelessness and implement long-term workable solutions.

Homelessness affects more than 9,500 of our neighbors; in fact, Hillsborough County has the largest homeless population in the state, making these long-term solutions particularly important. The “Unexpected Faces, Unexpected Places” Speakers Bureau is not only significant for implementing long-term solutions and building awareness; but provides an opportunity for speakers to share their story and become empowered by conversing with their neighbors. By using their own voices and stories to put a face on homelessness, these speakers help inspire individuals with homes to participate in the effort to help all of our homeless neighbors.

The UFUP Speaker Bureau offers several different types of presentations, including:

### Brown Bag Project

- Panel Presentations
- Informational Tables
- Short Speeches
- Talks and Discussions
- “Minute for Missions”

We can also tailor a presentation to meet your needs.

**Chaplain Blair Holtey, BCC**  
**Morton Plant Mease Health Care**  
[Blair.Holtey@baycare.org](mailto:Blair.Holtey@baycare.org)

Blair Holtey, M.Div., serves as the National Board-certified Staff Chaplain at Mease Countryside Hospital in Safety Harbor, Florida, is a Board member of the Clearwater, Homeless Emergency Project (HEP), and Committee member of the Partners for Creative Aging in Pinellas County, Advance Care Planning Partnership of Suncoast Hospice and Project Grace, Ethics Committees of Morton Plant Mease Health Care and BayCare Health System, and a member of the Healing

and Spirituality Committee of Morton Plant Mease Health Care and the National Association of Catholic Chaplains (NACC) Task Force for the Recruitment of Chaplains.

He is trained in Basic Critical Incident Stress Management, Relaxation Response, Advance Care Planning Facilitation for Respecting Choices, and he has taught classes at St. Petersburg College Continuing Education Health Department. He is published in the American Journal of Geriatric Cardiology: "Ethical Issues in the Management of Geriatric Cardiac Patients."

His recognitions and/or awards include a Circle of Excellence Bronze Award – Recognizing Teams who Demonstrate Quality Improvement, "With Wings As Eagles" Leadership Award – Department of Pastoral Care, Contributions to Arts in Medicine in the September-October "Parent Guide" magazine, Co-coordinator with Ruth Eckerd Hall - Marcia P. Hoffman Institute Performing Arts for developing, implementing and coordinating the Arts In Medicine Program at Morton Plant Mease Health Care.

**Topics: Palliative Care and End of Life Issues**

**Mary Ann C. Holtz**  
[walt231@mindspring.com](mailto:walt231@mindspring.com)

Mary Ann C. Holtz has been a justice and peace educator and activist since 1979 and a Christian psychotherapist in the Counseling Ministry at St. Paul's Parish in St. Petersburg since 1985.

Mary Ann and her husband, Walt Davin, are founding members of St. Paul's Partners with Haiti and of the parish's Social Justice Ministry. Over the past 18 months, Mary Ann has read and prayed extensively about the environmental crises of oil depletion and climate change, and has written a paper summarizing her findings. She has concluded that each of us has a choice of three options at this moment in human history: denial, despair, or the path of transformative action.

**Topic: Environmental Justice**

**Robert King**

[rking@mail.barry.edu](mailto:rking@mail.barry.edu) or [rjoking7@email.phoenix.edu](mailto:rjoking7@email.phoenix.edu)

**Adjunct Professor of Theology and Philosophy, Barry University;**

**Adjunct Professor of Religion, Hillsborough Community College**

**Associate Faculty of Philosophy, University of Phoenix**

Professor Robert King, a former Methodist ordained clergy, received his M.Div. and Th.M. at Duke University after receiving his B.A. in Religion from Davidson College. Professor King has spent five years studying Ethics at the Ph.D. level, first at the University of Notre Dame (2000 - 03) and recently at Walden University (2009 - present), and currently teaches Moral Philosophy, Church History and Theology for Barry University. Professor King also teaches World Religions for Hillsborough Community College (MacDill A.F.B. and Dale Mabry), Philosophy (Critical Thinking) for University of Phoenix, and was recently awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to study and present a conference paper (now, journal article) on "Calvinism and Colonial Native American Religious Worldviews." Professor King is an Officer in his Assembly of the 4th Degree of the Knights of Columbus, and an Officer in his Division of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Irish-Catholic fraternal society). Professor King has been active in promoting Pro-Life witness academically and politically since 2002.

**Topics: Pro-Life issues, especially euthanasia. Issues of sexuality, to include early Christian practices of asceticism (celibacy), homosexuality, etc. Charismatic renewal movement, Pentecostalism, etc.**

**Marina Kopko**  
**Assistant Director of Respect Life, Diocese of Venice**  
[kopko@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:kopko@dioceseofvenice.org)

Marina Kopko serves as assistant director of the Respect Life Department for the Diocese of Venice and Director of Project Rachel, the diocesan post-abortion healing ministry. A 2004 graduate of the Blessed Edmund Rice School for Pastoral Ministry, she earned a Master of Arts degree in Pastoral Theology through Barry University, Miami. Ms. Kopko received a Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major of communications and sociology in 1979 from King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. In 1998, Ms. Kopko served as a full-time lay volunteer with Catholic Volunteers in Florida, assigned to the Florida Catholic Conference in Tallahassee. Since joining the Respect Life Department in 1999, she has given presentations on the life issues throughout the Diocese of Venice.

**Topics: The Death Penalty, Simple Living**

**Tony Lapitan**  
[tonvethel@verizon.net](mailto:tonvethel@verizon.net)

Tony Lapitan was born and grew up in Manila, Philippines. He received a bachelor's degree with a major in political science from the University of the Philippines. Tony came to the United States in 1955 as a Fulbright Scholar. He completed a master's degree with a major in International Relations from Lehigh University and a PhD with a major in political science from

the University of Oregon. Tony taught for 43 years at several universities in the United States and abroad, spending 29 of these years at the University of Dayton. He retired from the University of Dayton in 1998, where he still holds the position of Professor Emeritus of Political Science.

Tony has traveled extensively in the developing countries of Latin America and Asia. He worked as a consultant for USAID and the UN in the Philippines, Pakistan and Vietnam. He has authored several books, many articles in professional journals and several reports for the U.S. government and the UN.

Tony completed the diocesan Lay Pastoral Ministry Institute (LPMI). He is currently a member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Holiday where he works as a member of the Pastoral Council and the Adult Formation program of the parish.

**Topics: The Social teachings of the Church, Responsible Citizenship, Development: Not Necessarily the Answer to Poverty in the Third World, Human Rights Violations Around the World**

### **Howard McNier**

[howietwins@yahoo.com](mailto:howietwins@yahoo.com)

Howard McNier is on the Board of Directors of the Living Water Center (LWC) of Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in Bangkok , Thailand . The LWC Executive Director is a Redemptorist priest, Fr. Robert Martin. LWC cares for over 2,000 trafficked, abandoned, orphaned, and migrant children at schools and orphanages in Burma and Thailand . The children are often malnourished to the extent that even age determination is difficult. At the LWC they receive loving care and education -- including one hour daily of the Good News of Jesus! The Fathers, Sisters, Brothers, and volunteer missionaries daily risk their lives to recover children stolen by the sex traders and aide children in totalitarian Burma . Howard's experiences with these amazing men and women have changed his life.

**Topic:** Child trafficking in Southeast Asia

### **Pat Mermelstein**

[pmerm7@cs.com](mailto:pmerm7@cs.com)

In 1995, Pat resigned from her nursing supervisory position in an OB/GYN office after she became increasingly disturbed about the highly abortifacient nature of the contraceptive materials, routinely prescribed in the busy office. This event coincided with her return to the Catholic Church after 25 years. Pat soon became active in her Long Island parish Respect Life Committee, until moving to Florida in 1998. She accepted a position as Diocesan Respect Life Area Coordinator for West Pasco and worked with Sharon Iler for about three years. Currently

Pat is Respect Life coordinator at St. Michael the Archangel in Hudson, and is board president of the West Pasco Pregnancy Center, and editor of the center's quarterly newsletter. She is also a freelance writer and speaker. Pat and her husband, Stan, have four adult children and eight grandchildren.

**Topics: Human Embryonic Development and the Personhood of the Human Embryo.**

### **Mary Palamar**

[mpalamar@tampabayrr.com](mailto:mpalamar@tampabayrr.com)

Mary C Palamar, born in Brooklyn NY, has a BA degree (biology major) from Rutgers University, a master's degree in elementary education from SUNY Brockport, and a doctorate in education from the University of Rochester. She holds certification in elementary education, special education and administration. Mary has been a bacteriologist, special education teacher, special education secondary administrator and, for twenty years, a professor of education at Nazareth College of Rochester. At Nazareth she served as director of graduate and undergraduate programs in special education and later as chairperson of the Education Department. When she retired in 2002, the college named her Professor Emeritus. In Florida, Mary is a hospice volunteer. Mary and her husband Peter live in New Port Richey, Florida and in the Thousand Islands, New York. They have three grown sons and six grandchildren.

**Topics: Human Trafficking, Human Rights and Women's' Issues**

### **Lou Pekrul**

[pwh@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:pwh@tampabay.rr.com)

Lou Pekrul has been a parishioner at St. Paul Parish in St. Petersburg since 1972. He has been involved with the parish ministry to Haiti since 1998. In 1999, the parish entered a twinning relationship with St. Isidore Parish in Haiti. Lou has been the coordinator of this ministry for the past five years and has traveled to Haiti seven times. Lou has been a teacher in Pinellas County for the past 37 years. He and his wife, Peg, have been married for 38 years. They have five children and five grandchildren.

**Topic: Parish Twinning**

### **Dan Pepin**

[pepindan@hotmail.com](mailto:pepindan@hotmail.com)

Dr. Dan Pepin is a professor of anatomy & physiology, instructor of human biology and consultant on bioethics. He has developed six programs dealing with some of the more controversial bioethical issues of today. These programs are designed to educate audiences, small or large, and are appropriate for churches, pro-life organizations, the public at large, as well as high school and college campuses. The goal of each program is to replace the "complacency of ignorance" with the "responsibility for knowledge".

**Topic: Bioethical Issues**

## **Pinellas County Homeless Coalition Speakers Bureau**

Contact: G.W. Rolle, Community Education Coordinator:

[gw@pinellashomeless.org](mailto:gw@pinellashomeless.org) or [gwrolle@aol.com](mailto:gwrolle@aol.com)

In July 2008, the Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless began their Speakers' Bureau, and recruited a formerly homeless person to coordinate it. Utilizing a cadre of diverse homeless and formerly homeless persons, the objectives of this speakers' bureau are to: 1) educate the public about the changing face of homelessness in Pinellas County, 2) encourage the public to become vigilant activists for the cessation of violence against street homeless people, and 3) raise awareness and funds to support coordinated efforts to address the homelessness issue in Pinellas County. This group is developing original media tools, including a 15-minute video and a homeless newspaper, to help promote these messages. This growing ten-person speakers' bureau, which receives training and coaching from an Advanced Communicator from Toastmasters International, participates in five to ten speaking engagements each month.

Pinellas County Coalition for the Homeless

5180 62nd Avenue North, Pinellas Park, FL 33781

Ph: (727) 528-5763; Fax: (727) 528-5764

### **Anne Richter**

[arichter58@msn.com](mailto:arichter58@msn.com)

Anne Richter is a certified nurse-midwife, with a master's degree in Public Health from Johns Hopkins University. She has worked in a variety of maternal and child health programs for over 30 years in Africa, Asia and the United States. After retiring from The Lawton and Rhea Chiles Center at USF in 2003, Anne worked in Kabul on projects aimed at reducing Afghanistan's high maternal and infant mortality rates, and in Haiti with St. Paul's (St. Petersburg, FL) Parish Twinning Project. Over the past few years, Anne has spoken on her work in Afghanistan and Haiti to women's groups, classes in schools and universities and community organizations.

**Topics: Catholic Social Teaching, international work, parish twinning**

### **Claire Thuning-Roberson, Ph.D.,**

Director, Pharmaceutical Development, Thallion Pharmaceuticals

[croberson@thallion.com](mailto:croberson@thallion.com)

Dr. Thuning-Roberson has held multi-disciplinary positions in clinical, non-clinical, and manufacturing in the biopharmaceutical industry. Her therapeutic expertise in international drug development includes oncology, infectious, cardiovascular, and inflammatory diseases. Prior to Thallion, she was Vice President of Product Development and Compliance at Sunol Molecular Corporation from 2000 - 2004, co-founder in 1993 and CEO of Goodwin

Biotechnology (GBI), a contract manufacturer of biologics for clinical trials, and Director of the Goodwin Institute for Cancer Research before establishing GBI. Her early research experience was as Research Associate in microvascular research at St. Vincent Charity Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio. Dr. Thuning-Roberson received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from St. Mary-of-the-Woods College, Indiana, in 1967, Medical Technology certification at St. Vincent Charity Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio, in 1968, and Masters and Ph.D. degree in Biological Sciences from Nova University, Florida, in 1978 and 1982, respectively. She has published in the fields of tumor biology, immunology, infectious disease, and physiology. Her affiliations include BioFlorida Board (Member and Past Chair); Florida Atlantic University Schmidt College of Science Advisory Board (Vice Chair, Legislative Committee Chair); Florida Atlantic University; Chair, Center of Excellence Research Advisory Committee; Executive Advisory Council Member, CISAT, James Madison University; Science Advisory Board Member; and Member, AACR, AAI, and MT/ASCP.

**Topics: Donating Eggs for Research, Stem Cells, The Life Journey of the Unborn.**

**Chelsea Shoemaker**  
**Catholic Campaign for Human Development Intern**  
[chelsea.shoemaker@hotmail.com](mailto:chelsea.shoemaker@hotmail.com)

Chelsea Shoemaker is a senior at Saint Leo University in Pasco County. She is majoring in Religion with a minor in English. Chelsea is currently serving the diocese as the Catholic Campaign for Human Development Intern. Her interest in CCHD was sparked through serving the community in multiple ways such on alternative spring break trips around the country and locally with her school. Chelsea loves helping with her youth group from her home parish in the Diocese of Venice whenever possible and has a passion for working with youth.

**Topic: Domestic Poverty and Catholic Social Teaching.**

**Ann M. Stango, SC, MA, MS, D.Min**  
[Ann.Stango@baycare.org](mailto:Ann.Stango@baycare.org)

Sr. Ann Stango is a Sister of Charity of Saint Elizabeth, Convent Station, NJ, who is presently missioned at St. Joseph's Hospital in Tampa. She is the education specialist in Ethic, Ministry, and Spirituality. Sr. Ann holds Masters Degrees in Mathematics, Theology, Healthcare Administration and a Doctorate in Ministry in the area of the Relationship of Church to Society. Her past ministries included Catholic education, social services in low income areas, seminary advisor and mentor, and hospital administrator.

Sr. Ann holds a certificate from the Lutheran Gunderson Institute in Wisconsin in Advance Care Planning.

**Topics: Medical Ethical Issues in Healthcare:** Personal Advance Care Planning, How to be a Surrogate, Resolving Medical Moral Decisions

**The Spirituality of Healthcare:** The Healing Miracles of Jesus, Overcoming Moral Distress, and Why Catholic Health?

**Rev. John Tapp**  
**Co-Chair of FAST**  
[jgtapp@aol.com](mailto:jgtapp@aol.com)

Fr. Tapp holds a Master of Arts degree in liturgical studies from St. John's University, Collegeville, MN. Ordained in 1984, he has ministered as associate pastor, pastor and campus minister. Fr. Tapp is currently the pastor of Holy Family Parish in St. Petersburg and the Secretary of Worship for the Diocese of St. Petersburg. Fr. Tapp is co-chair of FAST (Faith and Action for Strength Together), an inter-denominational social justice ministry in Pinellas County. He also serves on the diocesan Presbyteral Council and various diocesan liturgical boards.

**Topic: The Mass and Social Justice**

**Diana White**  
[whitedl@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:whitedl@tampabay.rr.com)

Diane has been a member of St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Spring Hill for almost 20 years. Last summer she accompanied her son, Steven, on a trip with Catholic Relief Services to Ghana in West Africa, where they learned about and observed many of CRS's humanitarian programs.

**Topic: Catholic Relief Service humanitarian programs**